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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE
REF ID: A66012
200280017-3

Approved For Release 2005/03/24 : CIA-RDP91T01172R000200280017-3

THE CHILEAN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

The 4 September election in Chile can be expected to cause at least some deterioration in political stability during the coming months.

Pro-American Pedro Enrique Alfonso is the candidate of the center-left coalition, which commanded about 46 percent of the vote in the 1950 municipal elections. His apparent lack of popular appeal, however, and his ties with the unpopular administration make it uncertain whether he can win a plurality.

Right-wing parties supporting Arturo Matte Larraín polled some 32 percent of the 1950 vote and, like the center-left coalition, nominally control about 40 percent of the seats in Congress. He is generally sympathetic to American interests. The weak candidate of the extreme left, Allende Gossens, is the only one pressing for nationalization of the country's resources, although recent Ibanex propaganda mentions that an Ibanex administration would "consider" nationalization of the mining industry.

Ibanex has little organized party support but appears to have the greatest popular appeal. He has expressed himself as favoring good relations with the United States, but did oppose Chile's signing an NSA agreement. He admires President Peron of Argentina, and advocates a neutralist position in international affairs. Ibanex is receiving both financial and propaganda assistance from Argentina.

Ibanista leaders and some members of the center-left have been trying to detach Communist support from Allende. The outlawed Communist Party has retained significant influence in trade unions and an estimated voting strength of at least 40,000. Ibanex has said that he would guarantee Communists full legal status "as long as they do not agitate."

It is likely that no candidate will obtain a clear majority, in which case a joint session of Congress must select the president from the two candidates receiving the largest popular vote.

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Class. Changed To:	TS S O
Auth.:	US TO-2
Date:	05 JUL 1978
By:	

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